Anne Garrett: from Claybrooke to Shearsby
by Francis Howcutt © 2026
This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Anne Garrett: from Claybrooke to Shearsby

by Francis Howcutt

Yeoman Cottage, Shearsby

Introduction

Thank you to:

- The National Archives and the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland for conserving and making accessible a vast range of original records.
- Internet Archive, FamilySearch, Cambridge University Library and Wikimedia Commons for making freely available online digitised books, maps, pictures and other resources.

Internet links cited were checked on the date of this Introduction. If you find that any no longer work or their destinations have changed for the worse, you may be able to find the material that the link previously led to by using the Wayback Machine.[1]

Except in quotations, the name of William Howcott's wife is standardised as 'Anne'.

Anne Garrett was my 7x great grandmother. The Appendix sets out her connection with William Howcutt (1726-1782), who was an ancestor of most of the Howcutts who now live in the British Isles.

Francis Howcutt
4 January 2026
francishowcutt@gmail.com

[1] https://web.archive.org/

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

William Howcott and Anne Garrett

On 31 May 1658, William Howcott of Shearsby married Anne Garrett of Willoughby Waterless at her parish church. The villages are some five miles from each other. The couple set up home in Church Lane, Shearsby, living in the house facing the parish churchyard. It is now known as Yeoman Cottage and displays the inscription '1669WHAH' on a tie beam on the road frontage.[2]

It was at Shearsby that William and Anne's children were baptised or buried:

	Baptised	Married	Buried
Joanna	1660		
Elizabeth	1663		
Ann	1665		
Mary	1668	Joseph Carter 1691	1706/7 Laughton
William	1670	Sarah Campion	1713 Stepney
Ann	1673	William Linthwaite 1692/3	1702 South Croxton
Lucy		n/a	1675 Shearsby

'Ann the wife of William Howcot' was buried at Shearsby on 28 October 1675. The parish register also records the burial on 6 July 1675 of 'Luce the daughter of William Howcot'. No corresponding baptism was noted for the child, which suggests that Lucy was a newborn. If so, as the two burials were less than four months apart it is likely that Anne succumbed to the aftermath of her final pregnancy.

The Willoughby Waterless parish register goes back to 1559 but contains no baptisms of anyone with Garrett or a similar surname earlier than 1752. The FindMyPast index of baptisms in the surviving Leicestershire parish registers which it has digitised contains five entries during the period from 1623 (50 years before the date of the last baptism of a child of William and Ann at Shearsby) to 1658 (to allows for the possibility of an adult baptism right up to the date of the marriage):

Parish	Miles from Willoughby	Parents	Baptism	Age in 1658	Age in 1673
Whetstone	4	Thomas	1626	32	47
Enderby	7	William	1628	30	45
Mountsorrel, St Peter	16	-	1634	24	39
Claybrooke	7	Thomas & Mary	1637	21	36
North Kilworth	8	Thomas & Ann	1638	20	36

No records have been found in the relevant parish registers of an infant burial which could be of any of these five children. As explained below, there is strong evidence that William Howcott's wife originated from Claybrooke and was baptised there in 1637.

[2] More about Yeoman Cottage is at https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1188157

by Francis Howcutt © 2026
This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Claybrooke

Claybrooke is about seven miles west of Willoughby Waterless and ten miles from Shearsby. The settlements at Claybrooke Magna, Claybrook Parva (where the church of St Peter is located) and Ullesthorpe are all within the same parish. In 1676, the population of the whole parish (possibly including Wigston Parva chapelry) was reported as 362 conformists with no papists or nonconformists.[3] The following map shows the relative positions of Shearsby, Willoughby Waterless, Claybrooke and Ullesthorpe.

Extract from a proof map prepared for John Speed's atlas in 1603-1611[4]

Convincing indications that William Howcott's wife came from the parish of Claybrooke can be found in records of the Court of Chancery which relate to these matters:

- Around 1631, an exchange and enclosure took place of land at Ullesthorpe, partly in the parish of Monks Kirby and partly in the parish of Claybrooke. In 1669, either because of a belated dispute or perhaps more likely to ensure proper legal documentation, a total of 17 complainants sued a group of 35 defendants plus the wives of five of the defendants in connection with this. Three of the complainants and six of the defendants were named Garrett. Amongst the defendants were 'William Howcott & his wife'.[5]
- In 1670, a group of 17 complainants sued a group of 37 defendants plus the wives of four of the defendants to be relieved of payments arising out of land at Ullesthorpe. Three of the complainants and six of the defendants were named Garrett. Amongst the defendants were 'William Howcott & his wife'.[6]

---

[3] *The Compton Census of 1676: A critical edition* edited by Anne Whiteman with the assistance of Mary Clapinson, page 336.

[4] University of Cambridge Digital Library: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/PR-ATLAS-00002-00061-00001/37

[5] The National Archives: C78/1002, no. 11: Images of the original document can be seen at http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT7/C78/C78no1002/IMG_0011.htm [IMG_0011 to IMG_0016]
An abstract can be seen at https://waalt.uh.edu/index.php/C78_1669

[6] The National Archives: C78/992, no. 2: Images of the original document can be seen at http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT7/C78/C78no992/IMG_0410.htm [IMG_0410 to IMG_0417]
An abstract can be seen at https://waalt.uh.edu/index.php/C78_1670

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

There is no doubt that 'William Howcott & his wife' were William and Anne Howcott who were then living at Shearsby and that their connection was a result of Anne being a member of the Garrett clan at Claybrooke.

St Peter, Claybrooke Parva[7]

The Claybrooke parish registers are well-stocked with references to members of the Garrett family, extending back to 1563. The earliest will found that was made by a person with the surname who was connected with the parish is that of Nicholas Garrett and dated 20 April 1531. The will did not state where Nicholas lived but he requested burial in 'the churche of sainte Peter of Claybroke'.[8] The only baptism with the name Anne Garrett recorded at Claybrooke during the 17th century was that of 'Ann daughter of Thomas Garret husbandman & Mary his wife'. The ceremony took place on 24 December 1637 which would make her about nine years younger than her husband. No record has been discovered of her parents' marriage.

These children of Thomas and Mary Garrett were all baptised at Claybrooke:

	Baptised	Married	Buried
Mary	1635	n/a	1641 Claybrooke
Anne	1637	William Howcott 1658	1675 Shearsby
Elizabeth	1639/40		
Richard	1641/2	n/a	1642/3 Claybrooke

Both of Anne's parents died whilst she was still a child - 'Thomas Garrett' was buried at Claybrooke in 1645 as was 'Mary Garat widdowe' in 1648. In due course, a separate paper will explore the history of Thomas Garrett, his forebears and siblings.

[7] John Salmon / St Peter, Claybrooke Parva / CC BY-SA 2.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/
[8] The National Archives: PROB11/24/62: https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/D949062

This work is openly licenced via CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Appendix: Descent of William Howcutt from John Garrett

John GARRETT married 1608 Cubbington, Warwicks will made 1638 buried 1638 Claybrooke	**Joan LADBROOKE** born from 1568 to 1593 (*) buried 1653/4 Claybrooke
Thomas GARRETT baptised 1612 Claybrooke married buried 1645 Claybrooke	**Mary** buried 1648 Claybrooke
Anne GARRETT baptised 1637 Claybrooke married 1658 Willoughby Waterless buried 1675 Shearsby	**William HOWCOTT** baptised 1628 Shearsby buried 1701 South Croxton administration granted 1701/2
William HOWCOTT baptised 1670/1 Shearsby married will made 1713 buried 1713 Stepney	**Sarah CAMPION** baptised 1670/1 East Farndon
James HOWCUTT baptised 1698 Shearsby married 1720 Great Oxendon will made 1741 buried 1742/3 Brixworth	**Mary WARD** baptised 1699 Brixworth buried 1737 Brixworth
William HOWCUTT baptised 1726 Brixworth married 1757 Brixworth will made 1782 buried 1782 Brixworth	**Sarah ALLOM** baptised 1739 Brixworth buried 1821 Brixworth

(*) Assuming that Joan Ladbrooke was at least 15 years old when she married in 1608 and no more than 50 when her youngest child was baptised in 1618/1619, her own birth would have been between 1568 and 1593.